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DIFFERENCE OF APPROACHES TO THE CONCEPT OF EQUALITY: WESTERN TRADITION AND L.S. SENGHOR

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Abstract. In this paper, the authors present a comparative perspective of the notion of equality in the Western school of scientific thought—a notion that became the cornerstone for specific scientific concepts in Western social and political philosophy—and the non-Western approaches to equality, taking as an example of the latter the ideas of the Senegal politician and philosopher L.S. Senghor. Such a comparison is of interest because the African thinker, although he had studied in France and enjoyed political recognition there, understood the concept of equality in postcolonial context quite differently from the Western philosophers. Other African postcolonial political figures (e.g., J. Nyerere) have also addressed the equality concept, but it is Senghor's ideas that demonstrate so openly the African alternative to the Western approach. Senghor's concept of equality is inseparable from his postcolonial political activities: during this period of his life, he introduced a notion of Civilisation de l'Universel, Civilization of the Universal, which was based on this concept. According to Senghor, such a civilization should evolve through the use of dialogue on equal terms, integrating the values of different civilizations of the West and East. He juxtaposed this notion with the one of civilisation universelle, Universal Civilization, the evolution of which is based exclusively on Euro-American values and can, in its technocrat rush, distort human nature, leading to the demise of humankind. Trying to resolve the dichotomies of Eurocentric approach, born of the gap between rational and intuitive thinking, Senghor adopts a concept of equality as unity, which brings him close to the Eastern Christian tradition of interpreting equality. It is in sharp contrast to Euro-American social tradition, which focuses solely on rational and ideological conceptualizing.

Keywords: equality, L.S. Senghor, socio-political philosophy, postcolonial period, dichotomies, unity

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The first president of Senegal, Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906–2001), has been accused of many sins: of the justification of colonialism and neocolonialism; of the mystification of the African Negroid population; of the defense of racial universalism; of the biological and, at the same time, theological approaches to culture and civilization; of the unreflexive adoption of European terms and cultural clichés[1]. Senghor has even been suspected of popularizing the ideas of A. de Gobineau and L. Lévy-Bruhl [Erasov 1972: 92–93]. But in reality, he classed together "de Gobineau, and Hitler, and Anglo-Saxon hegemony" [Senghor 1967: 54], while on the subject of the main concept of the French philosopher and ethnologist, he wrote: "I don't believe in 'pralogical thinking'. The Spirit cannot be pralogical and even less alogical" [Senghor 1964a: 43]. Was it not this clearly articulated position, along with his appeal to the transcendent, that made Senghor the target of the most severe criticism? Accusing Senghor of the proliferation of the French version of globalism comes off especially strange when such accusations are voiced by the scholars who themselves implicitly base their reasoning on the secular-liberal standard that is all too closely connected with the Anglo-Saxon worldview [Lamola 2016].

Indeed, Senghor's words sounded very harsh sometimes, it was easy to catch him on sweeping statements: "Since the Renaissance, Europe, intoxicated by its scientific progress, its technical inventions, has been animated by a lust for power. <…> But let us stress the fact that this evil's roots lie in the dichotomous, Manichean spirit of Europe. About a hundred years ago, it was Engels who denounced this spirit of classical Europe, which consisted in believing and stating that a thing is true or false, irremediably, without any possible compromise" [Senghor 1961a: 12]. However, if we don't take these words of the African thinker out of the context of his worldview, then a whole multitude of meanings opens before us, which will be discussed in more detail later.

In historiography, Senghor has often been attributed with the very tendencies that he tried to escape. For example, there are many assertions that in man and civilization, he would juxtapose ratio and intuition, intellect and emotions [Mabana 2011: 7; Kharitonova 2024: 138]. But in reality, Senghor tried to overcome these dichotomies of European thought, calling for a dialogue *on equal terms*—a characteristic feature of Negro-African civilization, which preserves that which was lost in the West; which is based on the synthesis of cultures and neither fixates on its own values nor absolutizes them [Senghor 1964b; Senghor 1967; Senghor 1969].

In European historiography, Senghor's thought has suffered from incomplete and partial comprehension precisely in those cases when the authors themselves use exclusively rational interpretations, not taking into account his appeal to intuitional and transcendental. And this is one of the most precious aspects in the heritage of the Senegalese thinker, which has recast some of the most important Western concepts constructed exceptionally in the rationalistic tradition. We will try to prove this thesis using the concept of equality, one of the central concepts for his postcolonial political activity.

It has often been noted by the researchers of the equality concept that many thinkers, basing on their own preexisting worldview (Protestant, socialistic, etc.), would turn to different historical periods in the search for something to confirm their own ideas, which led to the distortion of the historical meanings of the words and sometimes even to the substitution of concepts. For example, A. Stoeckli discovered a projection of later socialistic ideas on T. More's "Utopia" [Stoeckli 1984]. In our research, we assume that all concepts of equality are historically conditioned, and the task that arises is, therefore, the consecutive analysis of these historical concepts in the Euro-American socio-philosophical tradition. Above all, such an approach is justified by the fact that, in

[1] For a review of the latest trends, see, for example: [Naidenova 2017].

contrast with the Western tradition, the Russian historiography has only analyzed the equality concept in the context of other subjects—as yet, there are no special works directly devoted to this concept [Tutorskiy 2020; Tutorski 2022].

When dealing with Senghor's speeches and works, it is also important to take into consideration their historical context. The general evolution of his ideas in the context of his biography has already been analyzed in the Russian historiography (e.g., [Lyakhovskaya 1995; Moseiko 2018]). On the contrary, the detailed analysis of his concepts within one particular period of his activity has never been attempted before. We will focus our research on the first decade after Senegal's independence in 1960 since it was during this period that the African thinker first articulated his main ideas about equality—and, what is more, did it before the international audience. Among sources, our special attention will be paid to his speeches published in separate booklets and short books in this decade, because they better represent the historical context than the same texts published later in the five-tome collection of his works, "*Liberté*." All the quotations are translated into English by the authors because the existing English translations of Senghor's works are not adequate for our analyses.

SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE EQUALITY CONCEPT IN WESTERN TRADITION

It can be generalized that in antiquity, the conceptualization of equality was based on the juxtaposition of "geometrical equality" and "arithmetical equality" [Stoeckli 1984: 93]. The former was understood not as an absence of inequality but as an equitable distribution of wealth according to one's virtues. For example, Aristotle defended not equality for all the citizens of a state but equality inside established categories of people. And for Aristotle, arithmetical equality (equality for all without exception) is better suited for friendship than for politics [Aristotle 1893: 266–276; Aristotle 1915: 1210a–1213b; Aristotle 1895: 164].

The notions of equality in the early Christian tradition have not been fully studied, as the researchers usually concentrate on the conceptualization of equality in the Middle Ages and the Modern Era, and predominantly on Western sources.

The Russian historian A. Stoeckli distinguished three different schools of thought in the Western philosophical tradition. The first followed the ideas of Thomas Aquinas, who believed that equality (understood primarily as an absence of economic inequality) had only existed before the Fall. Similar was the opinion of Erasmus Roterodamus, although he belonged to another school of thought. The difference between the two was in their optimistic or pessimistic views on their contemporary society and the institute of private property. Aquinas considered private property as a good thing because when fallen men work for the good of themselves, they do a better job of it than those who work solely for the good of the community [Stoeckli 1984: 94].

Adepts of the third school of thought, primarily John Ball and Thomas Münster, appealed to an idealized egalitarian state of an early Christian community, demanding its restoration on a full scale. Socially, it was an attempt to take a reform for the return to the initial social order [Stoeckli 1984: 94–96]. Conceptually, it was "the old Christian virtues gone mad" [Chesterton 1909: 51] because the Gospels, in the Sermon on the Mount and other places, call for conscious self-restriction, up to impoverishment, i.e., for acceptance of inequality, not for struggle with it. Spiritually, it was a complete disorientation because to reconcile oneself to impoverishment is one of the ways to Salvation, on the conditions of some other efforts [Luke: 6, 20–25][2].

[2] https://scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/NTpdf/luk6.pdf (accessed: 11.11.2024)

Moreover, the project of the third school of thought was exclusively based on the short citation from the "Acts of the Apostles" that described the emergence of the earliest Christian community in Jerusalem, saying of its members: "they had all things common" [Acts: 4, 32–37][3]. Yet there is no evidence in this and other historical sources that diverse early Christian communities in the towns of Palestine, Syria, Anatolia, Greece, Macedonia, and Rome were formed on the same principle of private property's communalization, while the Jerusalem community itself existed only for some years due to the general political situation [Eusebius 1926].

According to the Russian religious philosopher F.N. Kozyrev, in the texts of the Old and New Testaments there are only two cases when the idea of equality proper has been evoked [Kozyrev 2015: 125–127]. The temptation to become equal to God led to the fall of the first angel (Satan), and then the same temptation led Adam and Eve to commit original sin, ceding to Satan's words "ye shall be as gods" [Genesis: 3, 5][4]. The denial of Jesus Christ by powerful and educated Jewish people (Sadducees, Pharisees, and teachers of the law) led them to charge Him with "making himself equal with God" [John: 5, 17–47; cf. Philippians: 2, 6–11][5].

For that reason, in the Orthodox patristic literature the idea of equality has been perceived rather negatively. In the works of John Chrysostom and other fathers of the Eastern Church the idea of equality is juxtaposed to that of unity—the unity of different members of the Christian community as of different members of a human body (organic equality) [Theophan the Recluse 2006: 580–593]. They gave priority to the transcendental gift of love as the sole thing that bestows an opportunity to be equal in unity [Theophan the Recluse 2006: 594–627], which is closely connected with the principle declared in the Gospels: "all that I have is thine" [Luke: 15, 31; cf. John 17, 10][6].

The further evolution of the equality concept is, according to Kozyrev, connected with Protestantism, especially with the ideas of Calvinists and Puritans, and here the scholar enters into a productive dialogue with M. Walzer [Walzer 1970]. Kozyrev argues that in the West, these Protestant ideas helped to develop a widespread notion of equality as a Christian value, although this concept took a much transformed, hybridized form [Kozyrev 2015: 126–131].

For the same reasons, starting with T. More's "Utopia," the hypothetical equality of the past was projected to a real social future [Stoeckli 1984]. Noticeably, More was closer not to the idea of equality for all without exception but to the geometrical equality (in Aristotle's terms) in the form of meritocracy. Later, in a similar way, equality was conceptualized by the majority of philosophers with utopian socialistic inclinations—they defended various privileges for different strata of society [Zastenker 1985; Mitina 2019].

But this theorizing of the educated European philosophers was very far from people's expectations of equality that leaned closer to arithmetical equality: the more primitive the idea, the easier it takes root. Here it is important to stress that it was precisely this transformation of the arithmetical equality concept from an abstract idea into a political ideal that constituted the crucial juncture in the evolution of this concept that took place in West Europe in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. And this transformation was presented as an authentic Christian idea.

[3] https://scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/NTpdf/act4.pdf (accessed: 11.11.2024)
[4] https://scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/OTpdf/gen3.pdf (accessed: 11.11.2024)
[5] https://scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/NTpdf/joh5.pdf; https://scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/NTpdf/phi2.pdf (accessed: 11.11.2024)
[6] https://scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/NTpdf/luk15.pdf; https://scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/NTpdf/joh17.pdf(accessed: 11.11.2024)

The Western concept of equality penetrated the Russian secularized society only in the 18th–19th centuries, and to this day, the undisputed priority in this belongs to J.-J. Rousseau's works [Lotman 1967]. So far, almost all Russian textbooks on history or social studies present Rousseau's simplistic conceptualization of social inequality: it emerged when people began to appropriate land as their private property, i.e., with enclosure.

Rousseau articulated this idea in his essay "On the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality of Mankind" (1755). An axiomatic statement "on the equality which nature has ordained between men, and the inequality which they have introduced" [Rousseau 1923: 157] started it. In this book, it is implicitly supposed that all "natural" is good and all that is connected with civilization (governance, culture, science) can be bad and often becomes so. For the French philosopher, some imagined "primordial", "natural" state of equality was homological and static, while the epoch of civilization was diverse and dynamic.

Rousseau remarks that in a "state of nature", which he opposes to a "state of society", there is still some inequality (physical, sexual, mental) that is characterized with consistent individualism [Rousseau 1923: 174, 204]. In essence, contradicting himself, he writes here of a natural inequality. The egalitarian primitive community of *bons sauvages* (noble savages) was the invention of the later scholars, who introduced the theory of a "primitive society". The main idea of Rousseau was different: that the principal cause of social evils in civilization is rooted in socially established inequality, not in the natural one.

Met with a strong criticism of his ideas, Rousseau wrote in the conclusion to his essay that his suggestion had been to "practice… virtues", not that "the societies [must] be totally abolished" and men should "return again to the forests" [Rousseau 1923: 245–246]. Those who practice virtues "will love their fellow-citizens, and serve them with all their might; they would scrupulously obey the laws..." [Rousseau 1923: 246].

Thus, the Rousseau's text contained a more detailed projection into the future, and it was connected with the idea of a new (corrected) man. Reverend Alexander Schmemann, a scholar of the history of Byzantine Empire, demonstrates that this line of thought had a systematic nature: "Since history became Christianized, history stopped being understood as the circular movement of Hellenic time, but became a line leading us to the kingdom which is to come. We began to view history as being, from the very beginning—although it seems so anti-Christian, an oriented history. The idea of progress—bigger and better, bigger and better, bigger and better, *les lendemains qui chantent*, the tomorrows that sing—had already appeared then. All those Hegels and Schellings, and, finally, Marx and all those people who deified history, were in fact—without even knowing it—within this whole world of the Christian acclamation. Although they denied the transcendence and rejected God, for them history remained not simply movement, but movement toward the Absolute. One person may understand Absolute as the absence of a toothache, another sees it as equality and justice, a third, as world peace, a fourth, as whatever… But the fact is that each one projects his Utopia into the future: a Christian idea that went mad"[7].

Rousseau's "state of nature" was also "a Christian idea that went mad," a misinterpreted idea of the harmony man lived in before the Fall, in Paradise, because in the Bible, this story had a figurative, metaphorical sense; it should not be taken literally, much less projected on the natural history or the evolution.

Now it is evident that Rousseau's ideas were the prelude to the French Revolution (1789) with its slogan of "liberty, equality, fraternity." But as it has been noticed on many

[7] Schmemann A. *Between Utopia and Escape*. Lecture delivered in Greenville, Delaware on March 22, 1981. https://schmemann.org/byhim/betweenutopiaandescape.html (accessed: 11.11.2024)

occasions, maximal individual freedom would lead to the utmost types of social inequality, while the most consistent incarnation of the principle of equality in social life would impose maximal limitations on individual freedom. To be consistently logical, we should conclude that the concepts of "liberty" and "equality" are mutually contradictory. The Swiss intellectual F. Dürrenmatt tries to solve this dilemma when he says: if "the right-wingers defend maximal freedom and the left-wingers defend maximal equality," then the concept of fraternity delivers "sustainable equilibrium" between them, introducing humanity [Dürrenmatt 2010: 227].

Further conceptualization of equality in the West took place in the American socio-political philosophy in the second half of the 20th century, resulting from the necessity to justify some easing of the neoliberal doctrine [Sogrin 2021: 93].

In his book "A Theory of Justice," the Harvard philosopher J. Rawls tried to revise the liberal idea of an unlimited freedom for an individual to accumulate wealth, by limiting it with the condition of sharing some profits with the poor and needy. According to Rawls, a just society should balance "the equality of rights" and "the equality of opportunity" but under "the veil of ignorance"—the parties to a social contract should not know each other's position in the social hierarchy [Rawls 1971].

Recasting Rawls' concept, H. Frankfurt, another American social philosopher, put forward "the doctrine of sufficiency." Reducing to absurdity the idea of equality taken in its most primitive form of an equalizing distribution, Frankfurt claims that equality is not a value [Frankfurt 1987: 21]. The philosopher's ideological stance is simplistic: even though the poor and needy have many urgent problems, it doesn't mean that those problems call for immediate solutions, because they are not the only ones who have problems [Frankfurt 1987: 35].

Quite opposite were the views of the British social philosopher D. Parfit. He articulated the universal principle of "the Priority View: Benefiting people matters more the worse off these people are" [Parfit 2000: 101]. From his point of view, priority is an alternative to equality because it is universal, while the "egalitarians are concerned with relativities"—in different societies, equalization would be performed at different levels [Parfit 2000: 104].

Another revision of American democracy was incarnated in R. Dworkin's concept of "liberal equality," accumulated in the book "Sovereign Virtue: The Theory and Practice of Equality." He tries to solve the old dilemma between the left, emphasizing "a collective responsibility," and the right, for whom it is better to have "personal responsibility." In search of the third way between them, he introduces two combined principles: "the principle of equal importance"—for government and law, all people must be equal, independent of "their economic backgrounds, gender, race, or particular sets of skills and handicaps"—and "the principle of special responsibility"—everyone is equally responsible for making a choice himself, and government should only maintain equal opportunities for the possibility of choice [Dworkin 2002: 5–7]. In the spirit of neoliberalism, the concept of "liberal equality" denies any ethical restrictions in legislation [Dworkin 2002: 237, 282].

Some of Dworkin's ideas were developed by philosophers R. Arneson and G. Cohen in their concept of "luck egalitarianism": the accidental inequalities should be leveled, but those that emerged as a result of conscious choice should not be compensated. The weak point of the concept is that it offers no criteria of how to separate conscious and unconscious choices, let alone the fact that a conscious choice is not always free [Arneson 1989; Cohen 1989].

Some later discussions about equality in Euro-American tradition took place generally between "luck egalitarians" and "relational egalitarians," the latter putting stress on relations among individuals [Anderson 2010: 21].

From our point of view, there is one main deficiency in the discourses of these social philosophers: the bigger a society, the more efforts should go into gaining knowledge about relations among individuals and their welfare. To achieve equality for all, detailed information about a society is required, and the philosophers take it for granted that this information is readily available.

The difficulty to accumulate adequate knowledge about social relations was described in the works of social anthropologists, who touched, among others, upon the equality concept. [Robbins 1994; Walker 2020]. In this context, such concepts explaining the egalitarianism of hunters-gatherers appeared, as J. Woodburn's "delayed-return system" and N. Peterson's "demand sharing," while L. Dumont published a series of works devoted to equality as ideology [Tutorski 2022].

SENGHOR'S CONCEPT OF "EQUALITY"

In October 1961, addressing the wide audience of the United Nations, the Senegalese president L.S. Senghor (1960–1980) juxtaposed two important notions—the *civilisation universelle* (universal civilization) and the *civilisation de l'Universel* (civilization of the Universal), the latter, in his opinion, being "the final aim of UN" [Senghor 1961a: 8–10]. And the former he described in quite different terms: "…A specific civilization—be it of the West or of the East—could not alone impose itself and itself only upon the entirety of mankind without meeting the objection of the majority of it. It could only impose itself with force, that is, through a world war. And then it would exist no more, because our world would not exist either—it would be annihilated. If, through a miracle or by means of something impossible, this civilization were to impose itself without force, then, I'm sure, it would be monstrous and would not be worth living in. It would be lacking complementary and fecund elements of all the other civilizations. It would be '*civilisation universelle*' and not '*civilisation de l'Universel*'" [Senghor 1961a: 9–10].

It is important to stress that scholars, while analyzing Senghor's works, do not always take into consideration this conceptual juxtaposition, thereby obscuring his ideas. And the African politician and philosopher was actually opposing here the intentions of some states to dictate their values as an objective and universal doctrine at the peril of other civilizations' values. He insisted that "the Cold War" was a fault of "the imperialism of the Great Powers, i.e., that of Europe," which left the third world countries "the minor role of consumers of civilization, not the greater role of the creators of it" [Senghor 1961a: 10, 12].

In the same year in Sorbonne, he stressed again that "*civilisation universelle* imposed with force could not be *Civilisation de l'Universel*" [Senghor 1964a: 317][8]. It is there that Senghor introduced the "complementary equality" principle of civilizational values: "As was said by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, there is no mathematical equality among races, but there is complementary equality among them. And Civilisation de l'Universel is situated exactly on the crossroads of the complementary values of all particular civilizations" [Senghor 1964a: 318]. The notion of "the Universal" Senghor took from French philosopher and Jesuit priest P. Teilhard de Chardin, rethinking and redefining it.

In the same year in Nigeria, during his official visit, Senghor began his speech with the affirmation that the constructing of *civilisation de l'Universel* should be directed to achieve "not equality among individuals by the way of suppressing classes, which is an objective of classical socialism, but equality between colonizers and colonized—between two peoples, two races, two civilizations" [Senghor 1983: 45]. Here he connected

[8] Here and hereafter, quotations from Senghor's speeches preserve the original formatting of the text (italics, capitalization, etc.).

concepts of equality and liberty, stating that "to reclaim equality" means, in this case, to reclaim "the liberty confiscated and alienated by the colonizer" and not "the liberty of vegetating in a state of ignorance and disease, the liberty of starving to death" [Senghor 1983: 45–46]. And he also spoke here against the "colonization of the spirit," defining it as the worst form of colonization [Senghor 1983: 51].

The speech was entitled "From federation to *civilisation de l'Universel*." In it, Senghor stressed that the principle of federalism gives advantage to different countries, such as the US and USSR, Brazil, India, and Nigeria [Senghor 1983: 45–46]. It is not coincidence because Senghor saw federation as a "system that establishes equality among countries and therefore among races" [Senghor 1971a: 103]. That is why, according to the Senegalese thinker, the federalism should become one of the principles for constructing *civilisation de l'Universel*.

Thus, Senghor defended the idea of maintaining the political, economic, cultural, and spiritual equality between civilizations. For this end, he introduced the notion of *civilisation de l'Universel*, within which the principles of federalism and complementary equality should draw together the values of different civilizations.

By the beginning of the 1960s, the world had already gone through two political crises that threatened to escalate into a nuclear war: the Suez crisis (1956) and the Caribbean crisis (1962). This influenced Senghor's conceptualization considerably. In 1962 in Florence (Italy), he addressed humanity with "The Message of Peace," asserting Africa's "faith in a peaceful future" but asking "Why this faith?" and answering "Because there has never been a greater threat for the Human species than in the recent years" [Senghor 1962: 17–18]. The concept of *civilisation de l'Universe*l was linked in this speech with a call for a dialogue *on equal terms* and juxtaposed to the "national pride" and "lust for hegemony" of the Great Powers, to "the spirit of dichotomy" and "dogmatism," which are attempting to "destroy the notions, around which unanimity seemed to exist for two thousand years" [Senghor 1962: 18–19].

That is why Senghor, in the global context of the 1960s, in a specific way uses the slogan of the French Revolution—liberty, equality, and fraternity. In his opinion, these principles should become an indispensable element of international relations and of the "*civilisation de l'Universel*" [Senghor 1961a: 9–14]. He stressed on behalf of the Third World countries recently liberated from colonialism: "It is in accordance with the scientific and technical progress of the Great Powers that we must play our role, which is to affirm and bring to a triumph the principles of international morality—liberty, equality, and fraternity of races and nations, as well as of individuals and professional groups" [Senghor 1961a: 15]. Earlier he wrote in this connection: "Contrary to what Marx thought, and even to what Lenin thought, the advent of Socialism, and even of Communism, would neither consign to the museum of History Nation, nor Independence, nor such universal values as Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" [Senghor 1961b: 33].

Thus, liberty, equality, and fraternity are absolute values for Senghor, which he places in one conceptual group with scientific and technical progress. An appeal to science, an attempt to explain moral values with scientific data, constitutes one of the methodological techniques of the Senegalese thinker. But his thought was dialectical, and on numerous occasions he expressed his critical attitude towards European scientism as well, noting that "…spreading in Africa its rationalistic, scientistic, materialistic and atheistic civilization—capitalist civilization—Europe had disorganized Negro-African society more than any other, drying up the very sources of its civilization" [Senghor 1975: 56][9].

[9] This edition consisted of passages from different Senghor's speeches without a date, yet they could be mostly identified as from the 1960s by the method of textual comparison with other sources.

During his official visit to Brazil in 1964, the Senegalese president speaks again of the need for a dialogue on equal terms "between continents and between races, between ideologies and between classes, between civilizations and between nations" [Senghor 1964b: 42]. Here, he develops his idea of the "symbiosis of civilizations," pointing at the USSR, the United States of America, and the United States of Brazil as successful examples of such a "mélange of races and exchange of civilisations" [Senghor 1964b: 14–19]. It also appears to be the first case when "the construction of the *civilisation de l'Universel*" was proclaimed as one of the Negritude's political aims [Senghor 1964b: 24][10]. Senghor's reasoning is as follows: "[The problem is] that in the version of the *civilisation de l'Universe* that, despite everything, is being erected now before our eyes, all the values that are not strictly European are being suppressed; it is in that the Great Powers, despite our will, are constructing a civilization of robots" [Senghor 1964b: 31].

The report for the 4th National Congress of Senegalese Progressive Union[11] the president opens (and closes) with his words about "*l'Homme intégral*" (an integral man)—a human being of the future, who should possess "transformed mentality" and be "more restrained morally," should "triumph over disease, misery, and ignorance," be a model for the upbringing of "new Senegalese" and for constructing "*civilisation de l'Universel*" [Senghor 1963: 4, 51–52]. In the long report, devoted predominantly to the statistics on Senegal's social and economic development in 1963, such phraseology looks strange. But it is supported with a juxtaposition of "a society of abundance," defined as a society of "well-being" (*une société de mieux-être*), and "a society of culture," defined as a society of "ultra-being" (*une société de plus-être*) [Senghor 1963: 8].

Addressing the audience at the University of Montréal (Canada) in 1966, Senghor elaborates on his idea of a Man with a capital letter: "His vocation is in fulfilling himself as a **Person**—in freedom, i.e., in a spiritual **ultra-being**, by means of harmonious development of the two complementary elements of a soul: the heart and the head, intuitive reason and discursive reason" [Senghor 1969: 18].

Similar ideas about "*l'Homme intégral*" the Senegalese thinker expressed on other occasions [e.g., Senghor 1961b: 9; Senghor 1962: 20; Senghor 1964a: 125, 318]. In the context of this research, important is the fact that he closely linked this notion with concepts of equality and justice: "the order" established by "*l'Homme intégral*" would be "an abundance of goods distributed equitably" [Senghor 1975: 48]. Because, he claimed, "What is the justice if it is not an equality of chances given initially to all people, whatever their race or their condition?" [Senghor 1975: 49–50]. In this case, the African philosopher applied the notion of equality as the equality of opportunity (see above).

Following this logic, Senghor also reinterprets the key notions of Marxism [Senghor 1975: 46–49, 61–67], for example, correcting the description of inequality in African societies: "In black Africa, functionaries and employees, even workers, are bourgeoisie in relation to peasants and pastoralists, fishermen and artisans. It would be a mistake to designate them with the word *proletarians*" [Senghor 1975: 48–49]. All these connotations are no coincidence for Senghor, whose notion of "*l'Homme intégral*" is closely connected to his ideas about African socialism, which should "integrate the spiritual values" because "we can absolutely legitimately be socialists while remaining religious" [Senghor 1975: 48–49].

In his speech at Sorbonne (1961), Senghor tried to solve the classical, for the European mind, dichotomy of matter and spirit: "Europe is a civilization of discursive

[10] On the origins and evolution of Negritude, see [Moseiko 2018; Naidenova 2017; Lyakhovskaya 1995]

[11] The then Senegalese ruling political party, of which Senghor was the general secretary.

reason—of analysis, of mathematics, and mechanics. Your temptation, to which you sometimes succumb, has been a dichotomy, especially between idealism and materialism. You have too often juxtaposed spirit and matter, reason and heart, science and faith—or art—without noticing a danger. The danger to create a world of machines without a soul, I dare to say, without human warmth" [Senghor 1964a: 317]. Evolving his conceptualization of Negritude, he clarifies: "It is Negritude that essentially is this human warmth, that is *presence in life*—in the world. It is *existentialism*, to put it in your terms, rooted in the Mother Earth, thriving under the sun of Faith" [Senghor 1964a: 317]. And then the African thinker stresses that he is speaking about "a communion of a Man to other men and beyond that—to all *existence*, from a pebble to God" [Senghor 1964a: 317].

Senghor's idea of *l'équilibre* (equilibrium) between material and spiritual, mind and heart, attitude towards oneself and others[12] is one of the most important in his system of thought [Senghor 1964a: 12, 49; Senghor 1969: 8, 34]. In his opinion, "equality and the sense of human *dignity* ruled" in the Negro-African society, and due to it, "*hierarchy and equilibrium*" of different social powers and tendencies were maintained [Senghor 1964a: 32, 53]. This is the "*unity and harmony*" that should be placed in the foundation of the "*Civilisation de l'Universel*," which, argues the African philosopher, could only be born as the "*Civilization of Unity*" [Senghor 1964a: 53, 318].

In the University of Montréal in 1966, Senghor asserts that the "unity, equilibrium, and harmony of the Negro-African civilization" are the things this civilization can offer to the World, stressing this aspect as an important political attribute of Negritude [Senghor 1969: 34]. The next year, in the University of Cairo (Egypt), he presented one of his most sophisticated in scientific respect speeches, finishing it with reference to "equilibrium" and "*Humanism*" almost as synonyms [Senghor 1967: 104–105]. Here he called again for an accord "between ratio and faith," between "intuitive reason and discursive reason," between religion and philosophy [Senghor 1967: 100–102].

It is from this perspective that, during his official visit to Brussels in 1970, Senghor speaks out against the European scholastic conceptualization of religion, i.e., against the juxtaposition of religion and philosophy, of which the works of Hegel are an epitome [Hegel 2019]. According to the African philosopher's idea, we need "to defend the divine, *transcendental* character of Religion from too logical, too juristic interpretations of European theologians inclined to reduce religion to formulas, to pills" [Senghor 1971b: 44]. A significant number of European critics of the African thinker preferred to overlook this remark.

During his official visit to Brazil, Senghor underlined that "any civilization—or better to say, any culture—has a soul, being the *Spirit*" [Senghor 1964b: 25]. Reinterpreting the Cartesian tradition, according to which the spirit is "the cause and end of Man," he affirmed: "Spirit is the totality of Reason, it is, at the same time, the discursive reason that distinguishes and describes facts and the intuitive reason that transfigures a fact, creating an image-symbol filled with *Sense*" [Senghor 1964b: 23]. The lack of spiritual values was what led to the key "contradictions of the 20th century"—"the century of dichotomies and prejudice, confusions and simplifications, ideologies without heart and esthetics without imagination" [Senghor 1964b: 22–23]. The grave peril of this choice lies "in reason that is unreasonable, in techniques that are destructive, in ideology that negates itself," with the result that "*Blood* prevails over *Sense*, *Instinct* over Reason, Egotism over Generosity" [Senghor 1964b: 23].

[12] Let's remember Dürrenmatt's ideas about "liberty, equality and fraternity."

CONCLUSION

L.S. Senghor defended a fundamental idea of the necessity to maintain equality between civilizations in all spheres: political, economic, cultural, and spiritual. He conceptualized the notion of the *civilisation de l'Universel* based on the principles of dialogue, federalism, and complementary equality, outlining the path for the synthesis of values of different civilizations. He juxtaposed this notion to the project of *civilisation universelle*, meaning, first of all, the Euro-American civilization, the culture of which tends to suppress heterodoxy, non-conformist way of life, and alternative values. And interpreting equality as unity, the Senegalese thinker came close to the Eastern Christian tradition: his idea of the "*Civilization of Unity*" based on harmony resembled the concept of organic equality that had been developed by the early Christian thinkers.

Senghor's approach looks all the more relevant today, when the collective West is aggressively promoting its project of the universal civilization, absolutizing neoliberal and secular values at the cost of the values of other cultures and peoples, especially religious values. Our analysis of the history of the equality concept in the Western tradition is but one of the ways to demonstrate this thesis. In accordance with their earlier tradition, contemporary Euro-American social and political philosophers approach the problem of social equality purely on the basis of rational thinking, ignoring the intuitive and irrational in human beings. Conversely, Senghor defended the necessity to overcome a dichotomy between intuition and reason in the Western thinking.

Taking into account all the practical relevance of Senghor's ideas, their utopian aspects are still evident: his belief that the scientific and technical progress can save the world from destruction, while in reality, it serves to aggravate the peril; his belief in the possibility of building a society of "the equilibrium" that would balance out the different needs of a contemporary individual, who is still very far from the ideal model of *l'Homme intégral*. However, in the first years after independence, few African politicians could desist an appeal to "the tomorrows that sing," of which we mentioned above.

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РАЗЛИЧИЕ ПОДХОДОВ К КОНЦЕПТУ «РАВЕНСТВО»: ЗАПАДНАЯ ТРАДИЦИЯ И Л.С. СЕНГОР

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Аннотация. В статье дана сравнительная перспектива подхода к равенству в западной научной мысли, который лег в основу конкретно-научных концепций в социальной и политической философии, и незападного подхода на примере представлений о равенстве сенегальского философа и политика Л.С. Сенгора. Это сопоставление интересно тем, что африканский мыслитель, получивший образование и политическое признание во Франции, осмыслил в постколониальном контексте идею равенства иным образом, чем западные философы. Концепт равенства широко использовали и другие политические деятели освободившейся Африки (например, Дж. Ньерере), однако именно идеи Л.С. Сенгора наиболее четко демонстрируют альтернативу западным подходам. Концепт «равенство» выступает у Л.С. Сенгора как неотъемлемая часть его постколониальной политической деятельности: именно в этот период он ввел основанное на нем понятие цивилизации универсума. По его мысли, последняя должна развиваться путем диалога на равных, интегрируя ценности различных цивилизаций Востока и Запада. Это понятие он противопоставлял той версии универсальной цивилизации, которая развивается исключительно на базе ценностей евро-американской традиции и в своем техногенном порыве может привести к искажению природы человека и гибели человечества. Идя путем преодоления европоцентричных дихотомий, порожденных разрывом между рациональным и интуитивным мышлением, Л.С. Сенгор приходит к пониманию равенства как единства, что сближает его с восточно-христианской традицией в осмыслении этого концепта. Его подход резко контрастирует с чисто рациональным и идеологическим осмыслением равенства в евро-американской традиции.

Ключевые слова: равенство, Л.С. Сенгор, социально-политическая философия, постколониальный период, дихотомии, единство

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